

the Milky Stork's habitat requirements. The coasts of Indramayu-Cirebon have been identified in recent years as having relatively high numbers of Milky Storks, but also very high hunting pressure (Raharjaningtrah 1988, Milton and Marhadi 1989, Yus Rusila Noor 1989), and it is an important site for implementation of conservation measures and protection of the species in Java.

The observation was made while we took part in a waterbird study training course, organised by the Indonesian Directorate General of Forest Protection and Nature Conservation (PHPA), Asian Wetland Bureau (AWB), Indonesia and Australasian Wader Study Group (AWSG). Comments on the first draft were kindly provided by Marcel J. Silvius, Yus Rusila Noor, Paul Jepson and Bas van Balen.

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## A sighting of *Ficedula (crypta) disposita* in Luzon, Philippines

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Two male flycatchers *Ficedula (crypta) disposita* were seen on 12 July 1991 at Angat Dam, Luzon, Philippines. This is the only record of this taxon other than the female type-specimen collected in the Zambales Mountains (Ripley and Marshall 1967). The distinctive appearance of *disposita* appears to warrant its treatment as a species.

Two birds were seen on 12 July 1991 at 500 m in highly degraded secondary forest with much bamboo, about 100 m from a steep slope covered in primary forest, at Angat Dam, Luzon, Philippines. They were first detected by the song: a flycatcher-like warble, similar in tone and pattern to that of Snowy-browed Flycatcher *Ficedula hyperythra*, heard subsequently in the Philippines. The song was a high-pitched, thin warble of three distinct notes, the middle note higher-pitched than the others, then a faster series of descending notes, this phrase being repeated after a few seconds. Over the next five minutes, the birds remained within a few metres of the path, singing intermittently. Although the birds were usually hidden in low undergrowth, clear unobstructed views were obtained by all four observers of both birds. They were small slight passerines, perching on vegetation or fallen branches and logs, up to 2 m off the ground. The tail was strikingly patterned, with pale orange-rufous outer rectrices contrasting with dark brown central rectrices (probably just the central pair) and a terminal band of about 30% of the exposed length of the other rectrices. The uppertail coverts were darker rufous and the rest of the upperparts greyish-brown, becoming grey on the lores, but with the rest of the head plain, making the large eye very prominent. The throat was white and clear-cut from the upperparts, and the breast was mottled with buff. The legs were pale pink. This species was not heard or seen subsequently by these observers, during a total of five days spent at this site.

The descriptions of *disposita* in duPont (1971) and in Ripley and Marshall (1967) enabled only a tentative identification; however, a detailed description of the type specimen made by J. T. Marshall (*in litt.* 1992) agrees very closely with the field description of the Angat birds. The specimen was said by Marshall (*in litt.* 1992) to have a duller rufous base colour to the tail than that described for the Angat birds; this could perhaps be a result of the viewing conditions.

On the basis that the Angat *disposita* were singing, that they appeared to be agonistic towards each other, that the song was similar to that of *F. hyperythra* and that only male *hyperythra* were heard to sing, they are concluded to have been male birds. The type was a female and, therefore, *disposita* is apparently sexually monomorphic. *F. bonthaina* shows slight sexual dimorphism, whilst the other taxa discussed below are sexually monomorphic.

The type-specimen was taken in forest at 760 m in the Zambales Mountains, about 130 km west of Angat (Ripley and Marshall 1967). Ripley and Marshall considered *Ficedula crypta* to comprise three allopatric subspecies: *crypta* on Mindanao, *bonthaina* on Sulawesi and *disposita* on Luzon. Closely related are *harterti* of Sumba and *platenae* of Palawan, both generally considered full species (e.g. White and Bruce 1986); all are monotypic. However, duPont (1971), White and Bruce (1986) and Dickinson *et al.* (1991) split *bonthaina* as Lompobattang Flycatcher. *Bonthaina* and *platenae* are represented in the collections of the British Museum (Natural History);

these taxa appeared to be much closer in plumage to one another than either was to the *disposita* seen at Angat. Specimens of *crypta* and *platenae* in the National Museum of Natural History in the U.S.A. (USNM) are bigger and heavier-billed than the specimen of *disposita*, whilst all are distinctively plumaged. The *disposita* specimen had a more olive-brown back than the chestnut-maroon back of *crypta*. The tail was patterned dusky and rufous on the inner webs of all except the central pair of rectrices, which were more diffuse dusky (Figure 1), unlike the uniform purplish-red tail of *crypta* (J. T. Marshall *in litt.* 1992). Indeed, J. T. Marshall (*in litt.* 1992), is unsure whether *disposita* is closely related to *crypta*. Considering the differences of size and plumage between *disposita* and *crypta*, and the treatment of all the other relevant forms as species, it would seem prudent to split *disposita* as a species. An apt English name, following the etymology of *disposita* and *crypta*, would be Furtive Flycatcher.

All five taxa discussed above are poorly-known and have very restricted ranges. Their geographical ranges vary between most of Palawan for *platenae* to a single mountain for *bonthaina*. There have been no recent records of *bonthaina*, just one of *harterti* (Collar and Andrew 1988) and scattered specimen records of *crypta* (Dickinson *et al.* 1991) followed by more unpublished recent nettings and sightings. Where known, it appears that they are species tolerant of, or restricted to, forest at medium altitudes, with *crypta* ranging up to 1,500 m. Based on their geographical and altitudinal restrictions, and perhaps dependence on primary forest, all must be considered in some danger of extinction. *F. crypta* is listed in Collar and Andrew (1988) as 'Near-threatened', and this may still be accurate. However, *disposita* has only been recorded in forest at lower altitude, over a smaller area and on fewer occasions. Its population at Angat Dam must be small because birders have subsequently located skulking species such as Rabor's Wren-Babbler *Napothera rabori* several times (T. H. Fisher verbally 1992), but there have been no further records of *disposita*. Forest covers a considerable area at Angat Dam but the Zambales Mountains have little lowland or mid-altitude forest left, and the whole of Luzon has extremely little forest away from the northern mountain ranges of the Cordillera Central and Sierra Madre (Swedish Space Corporation 1988). The forest at Angat Dam is being rapidly cleared and degraded (pers. obs.; T. H. Fisher verbally 1991) despite its protection as a reservoir watershed. With an impressive array of

**Figure 1.** Tail pattern of *Ficedula (crypta) disposita* based on a sketch of the specimen by J. T. Marshall



lowland forest birds recorded in recent years at this site, including the following listed as internationally threatened by Collar and Andrew (1988): Rabor's Wren-Babbler, Ashy-breasted Flycatcher *Muscicapa randi*, Celestial Monarch *Hypothymis coelestis* and Long-billed Rhabdornis *Rhabdornis grandis* (T. H. Fisher verbally 1991), Angat Dam must warrant considerable conservation action. Meanwhile, *Ficedula disposita* should be listed as a threatened species, and probably considered as 'endangered'.

Since the above was written it has been learnt that four *disposita* were netted in degraded and selectively logged forest between 250 and 300 m in the Sierra Madre in 1991-1992 (Poulsen in prep.).

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